REMARKS

Claims 17, 18, 22-33, and 36-39 are pending in the present Application. Claims 1-16, 19-21, 34, and 35-39 have been cancelled, and Claims 17 and 32 have been amended, leaving Claims 17, 18, and 22-33 for consideration upon entry of the present Amendment.

Claims 17 and 32 have been amended to include the limitations of Claims 37 and 39.

Reconsideration and allowance of the claims are respectfully requested in view of the above amendments and the following remarks.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claims 17, 18, 22-33, and 36-39 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), as allegedly unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 4,760,118 to White et al. in view of U.S. Patent Publication No. 2003/0130403 to Geprags et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,872,777 to Adedeji et al., and/or U.S. Patent No. 4,654,405 to Jalbert et al.

Applicants wish to thank the Examiner for the considered and thoughtful response to the remarks made in Applicants' last submission. Applicants maintain their position that the pending claims are unobvious in view of the cited art.

White discloses capping poly(arylene ether) when it is the only material present and capping in the presence of polystyrene. White does not disclose capping in the presence of a component selected from the group consisting of impact modifier, reinforcing filler, flame retardant and combinations of two or more of the foregoing. To evaluate what one of ordinary skill in the art would reasonably expect would happen if capping was conducted in the presence of a group consisting of impact modifier, reinforcing filler, flame retardant and combinations of two or more of the foregoing it is essential to look at the data provided by White. White teaches that in the absence of another component, i.e., when only poly(arylene ether) is present, using 4 wt% polysalicylate yields 86% capping (14% uncapped) (see col. 10, Table II, first and third rows). White also teaches that in the presence of another component, such as polystyrene, using 4 wt% polysalicylate yields 71% capping (29% uncapped) (see col. 9, Table II, first row). This data indicates that capping efficiency drops in the presence of another component such as polystyrene.

The amended claims require that the amount of polysalicylate is 2.5-4 wt%, and the poly(arylene ether) having aromatic ester end groups has less than or equal to 20 mol% uncapped hydroxyl end groups, based on the total number of moles of endgroups. This is contrary to the teaching and expectation of White and thus the pending claims are unobvious. White would reasonably direct a man of ordinary skill in the art away from capping with 2.5-4 wt% polysalicylate in the presence of another component using low quantities of polysalicylate.

Applicants respectfully maintain that the Examiner has failed to consider the totality of the cited references. In doing so, the Examiner has failed to consider the teachings of the references or Applicant's invention as a whole in contravention of section 103, including the disclosures of the references, which teach away from Applicant's invention.

Reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection are respectfully requested.

It is believed that the foregoing amendments and remarks fully comply with the Final Office Action and that the claims herein should now be allowable to Applicants. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the objection(s) and rejection(s) and allowance of the case are respectfully requested.

If there are any additional charges with respect to this Amendment or otherwise, please charge them to Deposit Account No. 06-1130.

Respectfully submitted,

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